

touch my fantastic lucky hump. But I was not at home in those places. Unpleasantries were frequent; I could never reach general agreements or avoid arguments. But now:

Talouse and I see eye to eye to almost every subject; Quasimodo never gets his back up over anything; and Joan seldom gets hot under the collar even when somebody wants to talk about religion.

In The Dirty Book Store

My God, what a crowd this morning. As usual I am wearing a false mustache and my vagabond knave's disguise, but I am small change compared to the

rest. At my left is the Superintendent of Schools in high drag, over there my former Sunday School teacher in a wino's get-up. A plain-clothesman

is fingering The Nudie Newsletter. He is right to do this, there may be a felon hiding between the pages. My associates here are in a dilemma. They

do not know which dirty book to buy: Nudie Teener, Nudie Matron, or Senile Nudes. Usually I ... wait, what is this? Rough trade or a proprietor? Help

me? Yes, you could. I'm looking for a '57 copy of the New Yorker, and I ... you don't carry the New Yorker? No, thank you, Nudie New Yorker won't do.

As I turn, my mustache falls off. Quickly I duck my head, assuming a new guise of crotchety sexagenarian, and I lean on my imaginary cane and make it for home.

The Tonsilectomy

In the bed next to mine in the cheapy's ward, a man died from the whooping cough. At three p.m. he gave a final snarl. His soul flew out of the permanently gaped mouth, staggered a little uncertainly in the real air, then made a bee-line for the light.